DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 306 844 HE 022 568

TITLE	Course Development for a New General Education Curriculum.
INSTITUTION	American Association of State Colleges and Universities, Washington, D.C.; West Virginia State Coll., Institute.
SPONS AGENCY	Fund for the Improvement of Postsecondary Education (ED), Washington, DC.
PUB DATE	Jan 89
GRANT	116AH60914
NOTE	29p.; This report is one of a group gathered by the AASCU/ERIC Model Programs Inventory Project, funded by the Fund for the Improvement of Postsecondary Education to the American Association of State Colleges and Universities, in collaboration with the ERIC Clearinghouse on Higher Education. For related documents, see HE 022 565-617, HE 022 619-643 and HE 022 645-659.
PUB TYPE	Reports - Descriptive (141) -- Guides - Classroom Use - Guides (For Teachers) (052)
EDRS PRICE	MF01/PC02 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS	Black Colleges; *College Curriculum; *Core Curriculum; Course Content; Course Descriptions; Cultural Awareness; *Curriculum Development; *General Education; Higher Education; Human Relations; *Interdisciplinary Approach; Learning Experience; Models; Program Descriptions; Race; Required Courses; Sex; State Colleges
IDENTIFIERS	*AASCU ERIC Model Programs Inventory Project; *West Virginia State College

ABSTRACT

West Virginia State College's course development for a new general education core curriculum is described in this report. The process of curricular change that led to the development of new courses entitled "Origins" (investigating the origins of the universe, earth, human life, the mind, and society) and "Race, Gender, and Human Identity" (reflecting the unique history and mission of the college as a historically black college) is explained. These interdisciplinary, team-taught courses are required of all students in baccalaureate degree programs. The new general education core curriculum at the college is an attempt to define a common learning experience for all students. The components of the core curriculum are structured into three groups (interdisciplinary matrix, intellectual and personal development, and modes of inquiry). This project has determined the following: curricular change in general education should begin with a thorough review of the strengths and weaknesses of the current curriculum; change must be based on the institution's mission, resources, student background and needs, and the sense of the need for change; the core curriculum should include distinctive components that reflect the educational values of the institution; and faculty support is essential for innovative approaches to teaching. Appended are an outline of the core curriculum and syllabi for the two courses. (SM)

ED306844

Course Development for a New General Education Curriculum

West Virginia State College
Grant # 116AH60914
Fund for Improvement of Postsecondary Education

January 1989

Contact:
Dr. Arline R. Thorn
Coordinator of General Education
West Virginia State College
Institute, WV 25112

HE022568

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

Arline R. Thorn

West Va. State Coll

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

☑ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.

☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

AASCU/ERIC Model Programs Inventory Project

The AASCU/ERIC Model Programs Inventory is a two-year project seeking to establish and test a model system for collecting and disseminating information on model programs at AASCU-member institutions--375 of the public four-year colleges and universities in the United States.

The four objectives of the project are:

- To increase the information on model programs available to all institutions through the ERIC system
- To encourage the use of the ERIC system by AASCU institutions
- To improve AASCU's ability to know about, and share information on, activities at member institutions, and
- To test a model for collaboration with ERIC that other national organizations might adopt.

The AASCU/ERIC Model Programs Inventory Project is funded with a grant from the Fund for the Improvement of Postsecondary Education to the American Association of State Colleges and Universities, in collaboration with the ERIC Clearinghouse on Higher Education at The George Washington University.

Abstract

With the support of a three-year grant from the Fund for Improvement of Postsecondary Education, West Virginia State College faculty has developed distinctive components of a new General Education Core Curriculum. The report describes the process of curricular change that led to the development of new courses entitled "Origins" and "Race, Gender, and Human Identity." An immediate positive effect of the project has been its stimulus to faculty development and commitment to teaching.

Origins is a team-taught, interdisciplinary course which provides students with a map of the curriculum and introduces them to concepts, theories, and modes of inquiry that are integral to the arts and sciences. It is organized around a matrix of themes that include the origin of the universe, the planet earth, human life, the mind, and society. Race, Gender, and Human Identity is also an interdisciplinary, team-taught course which reflects the unique history and mission of West Virginia State College as a historically Black institution and a "living laboratory of human relations."

Additional courses are in the process of being developed. All are part of a Core Curriculum that attempts to provide students with a "common learning experience." The history of the project is reviewed, and recommendations are made for undertaking the review of core requirements by other colleges.

Introduction

This report describes the development of distinctive components of the new Core Curriculum at West Virginia State College, in particular, two interdisciplinary, team-taught courses which will be required of all students in baccalaureate degree programs. Origins, a freshman-level course which investigates the question of the origins of the universe, the planet earth, human life, the mind, and society, is designed to provide students a map of the curriculum by way of introduction to college intellectual life. Race, Gender, and Human Identity, which fulfills a curriculum requirement in Human Diversity, is designed to reflect the unique history and mission of West Virginia State College as a historically Black college. These and other components of the Core Curriculum represent an attempt to define a "common learning experience" for all students, as well as to develop certain curricular components which will be distinctive for our particular college.

Supported by a grant from the Fund for Improvement of Postsecondary Education, the faculty have worked in cross-disciplinary teams to design these and other courses. Additional components in Civilization, Information Skills, Quantitative Reasoning, and Interdisiplinary Fine Arts are still in the process of being designed. As a result of the comprehensive review and revision of the General Education program, which was initiated in 1983 and implemented in the fall of 1988, we have found faculty development and the improvement of teaching to be integral elements of the process of General Education reform. A General Education Advisory Faculty, representing all divisions of the College, a Coordinator and an office of General Education, and commitment on the part of the faculty as a whole, the Vice President for Academic Affairs, and the President, provide the structural and strategic support for institutionalizing the project.

The revision of General Education, and the development of unique institutional components, are of course a response to the nationwide movement to reform general education curricula that emerged during the last decade. The faculty task force which reviewed the College's general studies requirements was especially influenced by reports such as Ernest L. Boyer and Arthur Levine, *A Quest for Common Learning: The Aims of General Education* (Carnegie Foundation, 1981), Jerry G. Gaff, *General Education Today* (Jossey-Bass, 1983), and *Involvement in Learning: Realizing the Potential of Higher Education* (National Institute of Education, 1984). As we proceeded with the design and implementation of a new Core Curriculum, we found our efforts reinforced by the more recent reports of the Association of American Colleges, *Integrity in the College Curriculum* (1986) and *A New Vitality in General Education* (1988). That the movement has reached a

certain maturity, perhaps ready for a "second stage," is reflected in the November/December 1988 issue of *Liberal Education*.

Although the faculty task group studied examples of core curricula and innovative programs across the country, including such notable experiments and models as Evergreen State College, SUNY at Stonybrook, and Brooklyn College, we did not attempt to directly imitate another institution's program or courses. We believed that we must design our Core Curriculum to fit the needs of our own student clientele, the tradition and values of West Virginia State College, the available faculty and financial resources, and our own definition of the "educated person."

Background

In the spring and summer of 1983, a faculty task group began the review of the General Studies curriculum of West Virginia State College. The review was initiated by the Vice President for Academic Affairs, Dr. Ancella Bickley, and conducted by Dr. Arline Thorn, Professor of English and chair of the task group, Dr. Bonnie Dean, Associate Professor of Biology, and David Wohl, Assistant Professor of Communications. The initial review was supported by a Title III Grant. The team undertook a review of current literature on General Education, and issued a 40-page report to the faculty entitled *Toward a Common Learning Experience: General Education at West Virginia State College*.

The report analyzed the existing curriculum and recommended that the College replace the distribution system with a core curriculum focused on the concept of a common learning experience for all students. A philosophical statement outlined goals for the student as an educated person who would "communicate effectively in speech and writing, understand and respect human differences, become an active, independent learner, understand the impact of science and technology in contemporary life, and know the history and artistic expressions of the culture(s) in which she or he participates." These goals represented a conscious choice based on student characteristics, institutional mission, and the current ideas of the movement to reform general education, of which the task force had recently become aware. Our report and recommendations, presented to the faculty in a workshop in the fall of 1983, were the beginning of a renewed effort to improve the quality of our learning environment and to motivate faculty to be innovative teachers.

A milestone was reached in November 1985, when the WVSC faculty, by an overwhelming majority, approved the outline and criteria for the proposed General Education curriculum. In the spring of 1986, Dr. Thorn, who has directed the project from the beginning, was appointed Coordinator of General Education, and thirteen faculty members were appointed to the General Education Advisory Faculty, a body charged with

the further development, implementation, and ongoing evaluation of the General Education curriculum. The GEAF will also serve as resource persons for the rest of the faculty in developing new course content and methodology.

West Virginia State College has shown throughout its history a concern for quality in education. Founded as a Land Grant college for Black students, it continues to emphasize in its mission statement the goal of providing educational opportunities to minority and economically disadvantaged students. WVSC has the longest continuing accreditation by the North Central Association of all the state colleges and universities in West Virginia. In the 1950's, the College admitted white students and began a transformation termed "integration in reverse"; however, a significant black presence and tradition are maintained. Taking pride in our unique history, we wish to see historic goals as well as contemporary thinking embedded in our curriculum.

In our review of the current General Studies curriculum, we took Boyer and Levine's concept of a "common learning experience" as a criterion and found the curriculum wanting. It was apparent that a chief characteristic of the distribution system was a lack of integration from one course to another, from discipline to discipline, from lower level to higher level, and even from the stated objectives of the curriculum to the requirements themselves. For example, stated objectives include the appreciation of literature, understanding the fine arts, and interpreting and integrating the experience and understanding of past generations (history). Yet although students may choose from over 100 courses, the curriculum did not require them to take *any* courses in literature, art, music, or history.

Institutional profiles of the student population show all of the reasons why we should be concerned with the quality of General Education: weaknesses in academic preparation for college, working and married students for whom education is often not a priority, strong career and vocational orientation as opposed to the liberal arts, an overwhelmingly commuter population who do not become involved in campus cultural or social activities, a majority who are first-generation college students, black and Appalachian students who do not share the cultural background and assumptions of many of their professors. The challenges are formidable, but not overwhelming. Unlike many contemporary curricular reforms, which have been carried out at relatively selective, or else relatively small liberal arts institutions, we proposed, with full consciousness of the challenge of our "non-traditional" students, to emphasize a common learning experience which would be the distinctive experience of West Virginia State College.

We also hope that our reform will be a model for other schools like WVSC, a middle-sized, state-supported, comprehensive four-year college, which admits students of

varied academic backgrounds and preparation. While attending the 1985 annual meeting of the Association of American Colleges, at which the report, "Integrity in the College Curriculum," was released, the Coordinator was impressed with the number of schools presenting accounts of their own curriculum reforms. It was also evident that the schools represented were either fairly selective, liberal arts-oriented institutions, or else large universities with considerably more financial and other resources than our own. If we can demonstrate that the reform of General Education is not only significant, but also possible, for a college such as ours, we may have considerable impact within a certain category of institutions.

Description of the Project

The new General Education Core Curriculum of West Virginia State College is an attempt to define a "common learning experience" for all students. The stated goals of the program constitute criteria which must be incorporated into all courses which fulfill General Education requirements. All General Education courses include experiences, activities, and concepts which will enable students to:

1. communicate effectively in speech and writing.
2. think, read, write, and discuss ideas analytically and critically.
3. conceive of human events, ideas, and issues within a historical framework.
4. perceive the interconnections of knowledge and apply concepts and skills from one area to another.
5. take responsibility for their own learning by becoming active, independent seekers of knowledge about the world beyond the classroom.
6. understand and respect human differences.
7. discover values that enable people to find meaning in the world and in their own lives.
8. make use of the college library and other resources and tools of information.

The components of the Core Curriculum are structured in three groups (see Outline of the Core Curriculum in Appendix 1). The Interdisciplinary Matrix consists of Origins, Human Diversity, International Perspectives, and History of Civilization, for a total of 15 hours. The courses grouped under Intellectual and Personal Development include English, Mathematics, Speech, Information Skills, and Lifetime Health and Fitness. The group headed Modes of Inquiry includes most of the kinds of courses usually designated as fulfilling distribution requirements in conventional general education curricula: Literature, Fine Arts, Natural Sciences, American Traditions, and Social Structure and Behavior. We

have attempted, however, to restrict the number of courses which will fulfill each requirement, and all courses approved must also meet the overall objectives of the General Education program.

The most innovative and exemplary aspect of our General Education project has been the development by interdisiplinary teams of faculty of two distinctive courses, General Education 100 Origins, and General Education 200 Race, Gender, and Human Identity (other courses are still in progress).

In the fall of 1987 West Virginia State College offered pilot sections of Origins, a team-taught, interdisciplinary introduction to the Core Curriculum. Course development was carried out over the spring and summer by a team of four faculty from the English, Biology, and Music departments.

Origins is organized as a matrix of seven themes that are interpreted from the perspectives of literature and the arts, the natural and social sciences, and technology. The themes are: the origin of the universe, the earth, human evolution, mind, symbols, individual and tribe, and civilization. Course materials include a diversity of short texts, slides, music, and films. The course format alternates between a large lecture group and small seminar groups. The large lecture sessions include faculty panel discussions and "guest lectures" in which faculty from outside the course are invited to play the roles of great authors, scholars, philosophers, and scientists of the past. Students are required to write short papers, keep a journal, and present a visual project. In 1988-89, we plan to have at least three teams of faculty offering the course to as many as 270 students per semester.

There are several justifications for Origins as a metacourse. Although it is a commonplace that the knowledge encountered in the arts and sciences is interrelated, the student's experience of the curriculum is fragmented into discrete units (courses), taught by different instructors and departments. Origins aims at helping students make interconnections in an intuitive way. The question, "What is the origin of ———?" is a way of examining the fundamental methods of inquiry and explanation in many different fields. The student gets a preview of the whole curriculum, gaining familiarity with basic terms, concepts, names, and principles that will be explored in depth in other courses. Origins is philosophically based on the concept that models of inquiry and expression are the fundamental "content" of a General Education curriculum. The publication of our own anthology of course readings, *Origins: Texts for an Inquiry* (Copley Publishing Group, 1988) has facilitated teaching and the perception of the course structure and concepts.

We hope that Origins will be not only the unique and distinctive centerpiece of our curriculum, but also the place where faculty come together with their common intellectual

and pedagogical concerns. Origins is intended to energize both students and faculty as we construct a "common learning experience."

Also piloted in the spring of 1988 was General Education 200 Race, Gender, and Human Identity. This course was designed and taught by a team of faculty from the departments of Sociology, English, and Psychology. Reflecting the history and mission of West Virginia State College as a "Living Laboratory of Human Relations," this course fulfills the core requirement in Human Diversity. The advantages of team-teaching in such a course are not only due to the enrichment of possible theoretical and methodological approaches, but also the opportunity to bring together faculty of differing racial, ethnic, and gender experiences to work through these important human issues and to address the social, political, and ethical dimensions of teaching.

The objectives of Race, Gender, and Human Identity are to confront stereotypes and prejudices about race and gender, to understand the reasons for beliefs and behavior toward members of different race or sex, to critically examine theories, research, attitudes, and feelings about the reasons for human differences, to promote understanding and respect for such differences, and to examine the social, political, economic, psychological, and esthetic consequences of racism and sexism.

In requiring a Human Diversity course for all students, we expressed the belief that all students at West Virginia State College should understand and respect human differences, and that this objective should be reflected both in the criteria for all General Education courses and in a special emphasis course. It is designed as a second-year course in order to give students time to gain some background in supporting disciplines and General Education, while yet being early enough in the student's college career to have a positive influence on peer relations and attitudes.

Course readings and assignments include many different perspectives, from sociology and political science, to literature, biology, and psychology. The instructors have been informed by new research and theory in minority and women's studies as well as traditional disciplines. The course format is varied—mini-lectures, panels, guest speakers, small group discussions. Students keep a journal and write essays on assigned topics. The instructors meet weekly to plan course activities and to evaluate student work.

Adequate evaluation of the success of these new courses will not be possible for several semesters, although preliminary responses of both students and instructors is mostly positive. Extensive student questionnaires were designed, as well as special items on the instructional evaluation form (given in all classes annually), and the results are still being analyzed. An attitude survey will be developed for Race, Gender, and Human

Identity. Instructors kept journals while teaching and made reports to the General Education Advisory Faculty on the success of the pilot sections.

It would not have been possible to engage in such extensive course development without support from grants. In 1983, a small part of the College's Title III grant went to released time and summer stipends for the General Education task group. As the design of the Core Curriculum and the concept of special courses emerged, the College succeeded in getting a grant from the Fund for Improvement of Postsecondary Education (FIPSE) in 1986. The three-year grant period has provided us a total of $157,505. Most of the funds have been used for faculty released time and summer salaries for course development and planning. The institution provided for a Coordinator, an office of General Education, equipment, and instructional support.

Results and Conclusions

It is apparent that whatever outcomes these new components have for student learning, there is already a perceptible positive effect on faculty involvement in teaching. In designing team-taught, interdisiplinary courses, faculty participants found themselves addressing fundamental questions of teaching effectiveness. It was a challenge but also energizing and inspiring to be engaged with colleagues in putting together a completely new course concept. By seeking innovative ways to enhance curricular coherence, by focusing on the idea of a "common learning experience," we discovered the value of a common teaching experience. Participation in a course such as Origins, or Race, Gender, and Human Identity, enabled faculty to perceive their own common intellectual interests and values as educators. For the first time, we were not simply originating individual course ideas (the usual special topics or thematic course), but working together to define fundamental objectives.

The FIPSE grant was crucial to our success in developing and implementing the distinctive components of our new General Education program. It legitimized the effort we were making and the concepts that guided our design, and distinguished our efforts as a "model program" with potential influence for others. Although we are just beginning to publicize the results, we have already received favorable notice from innovators and reformers at other colleges and universities who responded to presentations at national conferences and requested copies of our Origins text and course syllabi. The concept of a "metacourse" for General Education has been proposed by some scholars in the field, disparaged by others, but realized at West Virginia State College. The long-range success and effects of this course have yet to be determined, but early results are encouraging. Major universities are currently debating, sometimes heatedly, the merits of a human

diversity requirement as part of the core curriculum, but we have implemented a model course with much faculty and institutional support. Again, the effects remain to be assessed, but we believe the results will be positive.

Other colleges embarking on a similar course might begin by first reviewing the strategies for curricular change outlined in Gaff's *General Education Today*. Our experience may be summarized as follows:

1. Curricular change in General Education should begin with a thorough review of the strengths and weaknesses of the current curriculum.

2. Change must be based on the institution's mission, resources, student background and needs, and the sense of the need for change.

3. A core curriculum must be guided by a clear statement of philosophy and goals which will gain broad acceptance by the faculty and administration.

4. Adequate time must be allowed for design and implementation.

5. Formal approval is best achieved in stages, with opportunities for revision and reconsideration in process.

6. The core curriculum that emerges should include distinctive components that reflect the educational values of the institution.

7. Faculty support (for example, in the form of released time and other incentives) is essential for innovative approaches to teaching.

8. Although outcomes for student learning must be assessed in the long run, the benefits of such innovative projects clearly include positive influences on faculty development, commitment to teaching, and renewal of purpose.

Appendix 1: Outline of Core Curriculum

Appendix 2: Syllabus for Origins

Appendix 3: Syllabus for Race, Gender, and Human Identity

General Education Core Curriculum

The Common Learning Experience

The General Education curriculum provides a common learning experience for all students in bachelor's degree programs. All General Education courses include experiences, activities, and concepts which will enable students to:

1. communicate effectively in speech and writing.
2. think, read, write, and discuss ideas analytically and critically.
3. conceive of human events, ideas, and issues within a historical framework.
4. perceive the interconnections of knowledge and apply concepts and skills from one area to another.
5. take responsibility for their own learning by becoming active, independent seekers of knowledge about the world beyond the classroom.
6. understand and respect human differences.
7. discover values that enable people to find meaning in the world and in their own lives.
8. make use of the college library and other resources and tools of information.

For more information contact:
Arline R. Thorn
Coordinator of General Education
West Virginia State College
Institute, West Virginia 25112

Outline of Core Curriculum

Students in bachelor degree programs must complete the minimum number of hours indicated in each of the following components for a total of 51-53 hours.

I. Interdisciplinary Matrix

Origins (3 hrs.)

Team-taught, thematic course. Origins of the universe, life, humanity, civilization, as viewed from the perspectives of many disciplines. Non-traditional format.

Human Diversity (3 hrs.)

Provides the basis for an understanding of human differences and the issues of prejudice and discrimination.

International Perspectives (6 hrs.)

Courses selected from offerings in foreign languages and cultures, or courses which are cross-cultural examinations of social institutions and behavior, or which deal with international relations.

History of Civilization (3 hrs.)

Time-scale of human history; emphasizes the eras, events, and ideas which are most important to understanding of civilization.

II. Intellectual and Personal Development

English (6 hrs.)

Writing courses which also stress analytical and critical reading and thinking, basic language concepts.

Mathematics (3 hrs.)

All students must complete one mathematics (not computers) course, which may be a course required by the student's major program or a course entitled Quantitative Reasoning.

Speech (3 hrs.)

Introduction to the communication process; structuring and delivering oral presentations.

Information Skills (1 hr.)

Combines computer experience with library skills.

Lifetime Health and Fitness (2 hrs.)

A program that assesses wellness/health and leisure interests and provides learning experiences as well as physical activities to promote lifelong health.

III. Modes of Inquiry

Literature (3 hrs.)

Forms and themes of literary works; the meaning of human experiences as expressed in literature.

Fine Arts (6 hrs.)

Nature of esthetic experience; concepts of form and expression. Two courses must be from different disciplines (art, music, film) or one of the two may be an interdisciplinary course.

Natural Science (6-8 hrs.)

Understanding of the nature of science and scientific thinking; nature of life; nature of the physical universe. Includes a laboratory experience.

American Traditions (3 hrs.)

Emphasizes concepts and history of fundamental American institutions and which educates students for the responsibilities of citizenship.

Social Structure and Behavior (3 hrs.)

Examines the relationships between social systems and between social structures and the individual.

Origins

Syllabus
General Education 100

Your name _____

Syllabus
Origins
General Education 100

West Virginia State College
Institute, WV 25112

Origins is a team-taught, interdisciplinary course created by Professors Bonnie Dean, Carol Eich, Arnold Hartstein, and Arline Thorn. Course development was supported by a grant from the Fund for Improvement of Post-Secondary Education (FIPSE).

Syllabus cover:

The Hindu god Shiva dances the creation of the universe. The halo of flames symbolizes the fires of the cosmos and the cycle of destruction and rebirth.

To the student: Keep this syllabus with your course materials and notes for reference throughout the semester.

Syllabus

General Education 100
Origins

Course description: An interdisciplinary, team-taught course which is the "core of the core" of common learning experiences in the General Education curriculum. The course design is a matrix of themes exploring the question of origins in the broadest possible way: the origin of the universe, life, humanity, human thought, society, and technology. Each theme will be investigated across disciplines and through various modes of knowledge: scientific, symbolic, esthetic, and philosophical. 3 credit hours. Prerequisite: English 101 placement or completion.

Required texts:
Boorstin, Daniel J. The Discoverers: A History of Man's Search to Know His World and Himself. (Random House, 1983).

Sophocles, Antigone.

Objectives of the Course

1. To stimulate students to become independent learners by engaging their imagination and interests.
2. To give students a map of general knowledge in order to explore how the disciplines are interrelated.
3. To become acquainted in a general way with the differences in the methods of the disciplines and be able to relate concepts from one area to another.
4. To develop and practice intellectual skills, including:
   Inquiry, observation, and investigation
   Analysis, synthesis, and interpretation
   Verbal, numerical, visual, oral, and other forms of communication and expression
   Identifying values and opinions
   Knowing oneself
   Working and communicating with others in an

intellectual setting

5. To understand the significance of the theme of "origins" as a mode of inquiry into many areas of knowledge.
6. To gain a sense of the time span of human history in relation to the "cosmic calendar" and an idea of how time is measured.
7. To be exposed to a number of significant "texts" (a broadly used concept which includes verbal texts, mathematical formulas, works of art and music) that are the products of human inquiry and expression.

Course Outline

Origins is organized around a matrix of seven themes (see the diagram of the matrix). Approximately 2 weeks will be spent on each theme. A quiz will be given at the end of each theme. Reading assignments are outlined below. In addition, there will be short handouts and quotations. You are expected to list unfamiliar terms from the readings, look up these terms in a dictionary, and be prepared to discuss the terms in class. As you read, you should underline important ideas in the texts and make marginal notes.

Theme 1. In the Beginning
Objective: Understand and appreciate the philosophical, theological, and scientific significance of creation.
Readings:
Discoverers, chs. 10-14
"In the Beginning: God and Science"
"Science Captures an Elusive Beast"

Theme 2. The Cosmic Calendar
Objective: Conceptualize time on cosmic and geological scales and understand the measurement of time.
Readings:
Discoverers, chs. 1-3, 38, 74 and chs. 39-42
"Understanding Geochronological Time"
"The Cosmic Calendar"

Theme 3. Birth
Objective: Consider the evolution and definitions of humankind, and the relationship between human life and the natural order.
Readings:
Discoverers, chs. 54-59
"Darwinism Defined"
"Silent Spring"

Theme 4. Mind
Objective: Understand various conceptions of the human mind and its interactions with reality.
Readings:
Plato, "Allegory of the Cave"
On Freud
from Skinner, "What is Man?"
"Conditioning"

Theme 5. Symbol-making
Objective: Conceive of humankind as a symbol-making species, and understand the importance of symbols in our lives.
Readings:
Discoverers, chs. 60-68
"The Symbol: The Origin and Basis of Human Behavior"

Theme 6. Individual and Tribe
Objective: Consider the concept of social structures and how they shape the individual in relation to society.
Readings:
Discoverers, chs. 75-79
Antigone
from Thoreau, "Civil Disobedience"; King, "Letter from Birmingham Jail"; Rousseau, "The Social Contract"

Theme 7. Civilization
Objective: Look at past civilizations in order to examine their influence on the present.
Readings:
Discoverers, chs. 69-73, 80-81

Origins Syllabus

Evaluation:
Journals will be checked every 3 weeks. Grades will be based on an estimate of overall quality, including degree of involvement with ideas of the course, application of concepts, ability to reflect and speculate on discussion topics, summarize, write good questions, generalize, use vocabulary of the course, and respond to audio-visual presentations.

Grading System

Poss. points	Assignment	Due date
100	2 short papers	Oct. 6 /Nov. 3
100	Journal	Checked each 3 wks.
100	Visual project	Nov. 24
150	Theme quizzes (objective & essay	End of each theme
50	Final exam (objective & essay)	Dec. 15 (2:30-4:30 p.m.)
500	total poss. points	

Attendance policy: Three points will be deducted for each absence from class. If you are in the hospital or an emergency prevents you from attending, please contact the instructor.

Origins Matrix

Theme	Science	Literature	Art & Music	Philos & Soc	Tech & Culture
"In the beginning" Origin of the universe	Big Bang Einstein	Creation myths	Haydn, Milhaud	Why are we here?	Splitting atom
Cosmic calendar: origin of the planet, life	Copernicus Galileo Astronomy	Myths, poems of earth, moon	"Music of the spheres" Holst	Life on other planets?	Telescope, microscope Calendar, clock
Birth: origin of human-kind	Darwin	Myths of the first people Mother goddess	The senses-- biology & esthetics	"Male and female created he them" Primate research	Measurements Dating of ancient past
Mind: origin of consciousness	Freud Bicameral mind	Point of view Stream of consciousness	Schoenberg Surrealism Van Gogh	Psyche, soul Plato Epistemology	Behavioral conditioning
Symbol-making & origin of language	Linguistics Mathematics	Modern poetry symbolism archetypal patterns	Cave painting, "primitive" & modern art	Language & "reality" Structuralism	Numbers alphabets printing computer
Individual & tribe: origin of culture	Mead Levi-Strauss	"The Lottery" Folk tales	Folk music & art Stravinsky	Social structures: family, tribe Class, race, gender	Rural life & economy
Civilization	Archaeology History	Greek tragedy & comedy	Ancient art, architecture	Rulers & slaves Economy, trade War	City life & economy

RATIONALE

1. In format and methodology, Origins engages students in a variety of speaking and writing activities. The purpose of these activities is to stimulate interest in the material and to sharpen the skills required for effective communication. Students will participate in group discussions and collaborative learning projects, and they will practice their writing in various ways (e.g., formal essays, brief responses to films, personal reflections, etc.). It is hoped that such involvement will help create a learning community for students and faculty.

2. Students in Origins will read, see, and hear a wide range of materials. The various exercises and assignments built into the course will require students to demonstrate their ability to analyze, synthesize, and interpret information. It is likely, too, that the non-traditional assemblage and arrangement of course materials will promote a critical habit of mind by challenging students' assumptions about the nature of various disciplines and the ways in which they relate.

3. Origins is not designed to be a history course in the traditional sense. Its aim is not coverage of specific historical content. Nevertheless, as the Origins matrix suggests, an awareness of history (in its broadest sense) is critical to the course. The thematic components of the course--the origin of the universe, the nature of symbol and the origin of language, the origins of society, etc.--explore questions that are central to human history. It is hoped that such an approach will provide a conceptual framework that will enable students to understand issues and ideas that are fundamental in human experience.

4. The primary goal of Origins is to impart a sense of interrelatedness of knowledge. As the Origins matrix indicates, the central themes of the course will be explored through the lenses of various disciplines--science, literature, art, music, philosophy, etc. In this way the course hopes to promote thinking that is "multidisciplinary" rather than compartmentalized--thinking that considers issues and ideas as they relate to the full range of human experience.

5. A variety of materials and activities are planned to demonstrate how each theme can be investigated across disciplines and through various modes of knowledge. These materials and activities should stimulate students to become independent learners by engaging their imagination and interests. They should further instill in the students the idea that cursity about the origin of things is an ongoing process that ahould last a lifetime.

6. Origins will introduce the students to a vast array of ideas, traditions, customs and attitudes held by other cultures and groups of people quite different from themselves. It is hoped that this new understanding and the sharing of it with others in class discussions will foster increased openmindedness and respect for the differences in human kind. At the same time, exploring the similarity of the human experience as related in archetypes and myths should make the students aware of humanity's common heritage.

7. Conflicting values seem to underlie human actions. Where do values come from? Tracing the origins of these values is an important part of this course as is making the students more aware of their own basis for choice in their lives. A conscious analysis of the principles at work behind making decisions should increase understanding of other people as well as the students' own behavior. This should lead to an examination of the students' own values and a conscious determination of whether to accept or reject them.

8. Through demonstrations, lectures, films, exercises, and class and library assignments, students should develop college level skills of inquiry, analysis and interpretation.

Syllabus

General Education 200

Race, Gender, and Human Identity

West Virginia State College
Institute, WV 25112

This course was developed with the assistance of a grant from the Fund for Improvement of Postsecondary Education (FIPSE) in 1987. Team members were Profs. L. O'Brien Thompson, Sandra Marshburn, Rebecca Francis, Tayoba Ngenge, and Arline Thorn.

Syllabus
Race, Gender, & Human Identity
General Education 200
Spring 1988

Catalog Description
This team-taught course provides the basis for an understanding and transcendence of problems related to race and gender. The origins, nature, and implications of prejudice and discrimination are analyzed from aninter-disciplinary perspective. Prerequisite: English 101. 3 credit hours. Fulfills General Education requirement.

Instructors
Dr. L. O'Brien Thompson, Prof. of Sociology (Office Hill Hall 306, ext. 3049)
Dr. Rebecca Francis, Assoc. Prof. of Psychology (Office Wallace Hall 923, ext. 3269)
Dr. Arline Thorn, Prof. of English (Office Hill Hall 208, ext. 3073)

Text
Rothenberg, Racism and Sexism: An Integrated Study (St. Martin's, 1988) Additional readings from various disciplines and selected literary works.

Objectives

1. To confront the tendency to perceive and think in stereotypical ways about race and gender.
2. To understand the relationship between beliefs, feelings, dispositions, and behavior towards members of different races and genders. Course content, assignments, and discussions will require students to:

    2.1 Differentiate between fact and opinion about sexes and races.
    2.2 Recognize and evaluate subjective language about human differences.
    2.3 Determine cause-and-effect relationships in human interactions.
    2.4 Determine the accuracy and completeness of information presented on human differences.
    2.5 Recognize fallacious reasoning about races and sexes.

2.6 Compare and contrast information or points of view about human differences.
2.7 Make sound judgments about statements on human difference.

3. To distinguish between biological, psychological, and socio-cultural bases of races and sexes and to examine the uses and abuses derived from these definitions.
4. To cultivate understanding of and respect for both similarities and differences among races and between genders.
5. To analyze the social, aesthetic, psychological, economic, and political consequences of sexism and racism.

Methodology

Team Teaching: Instructors from different disciplines are responsible for planning and teaching the course. Other instructors will occasionally be observing, guest lecturing, or participating in discussions.

Consciousness-raising Techniques: The instructors will encourage students to express personal views (1) by creating and sustaining a non-judgmental atmosphere in the classroom and (2) by guiding discussion of a fruitful, previously assigned resource.

Evaluation: Pre- and post-tests (objective or short essay types) will be used to assess students' knowledge and beliefs about sexism/racism, their feelings or attitudes toward members of other sexes/races, and their valuation of race and gender.

Non-print Resources: Will include advertisements, films, sculpture, paintings, photographs, music, guest speakers from the campus and community.

Seating: Students will be seated to enhance particular classroom activities (1) in teams for debates, sharing writings, role playing, or solving problems, or (2) in concentric semi-circles for lectures or whole class discussions.

Written assignments will include critiques, analyses, objective and essay tests, comparisons of print/non-print materials, and a final examination.

Oral assignments will include individual and panel presentations on assigned activities.

Requirements

1. Journal 20% (see below)
2. Short papers 20% (1-2 pages for each major unit of the course)
3. Midterm exam 20%
4. Final exam 20%
5. Participation 20% (based on attendance and contribution to group activities)

Journal

The purpose of the journal is to reflect your ongoing investment and involvement in the course. It will provide feedback to the instructors as well as an opportunity to practice writing skills for the required papers and exams. Some writings will be the basis for sharing opinions and experiences in small group sessions.

- Use a 9 1/2" x 6" spiral notebook (stocked by the Bookstore).

- **What to write about**
  Use the journal to record:
  - Commentary on course readings, discussions, and current events related to the course
  - Autobiographical reflections on your experience of race and gender
  - Problems and personal responses as you go through the course
  - Results of group discussions and activities
  - Responses to assigned questions or topics

- The journal is not to be used for class notes. Keep these in a separate place.
- Write a minimum of one entry per class meeting (1-2 pages).
- Date each entry.
- Write legibly in ink.
- Journals will be collected each 2-3 weeks and read by the instructors.

- Journals which meet the minimum requirements will receive a minimum grade of "C." An overall evaluation of the journal will be given at the end of the semester.

Attendance

Since discussion and group activities are part of the learning method, students are expected to attend each session. If an emergency prevents you from attending, please contact one of the instructors.